

Sketch

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The Coming Season

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The Coming Season

James C. Wickliff

Abstract

Unclad, the bony fingers on the lawn Reach skyward, clutching at the cold gray blast That stripes them of their garb...

"Jimmy and the Mrs. were inside. They didn't see it. I didn't say nothing to them either. Just walked over here when I saw you come back to the house. They don't know about it, Henry."

He'd be all right if Mr. Johnson would just let him sit here awhile more with his eyes closed. In the sun like this. Everything would go away and he'd be all right in a little bit.

"You just stay here now, Henry, until I come back. You hear? Just wait until I come back. Henry?" Henry nodded but kept his eyes closed. "I'll be back in a little while." Mr. Johnson walked off.

* * *

It all happened in an hour. There was four parts to it, one for each step. Each one took fifteen minutes. Quarter of an hour. Whole hour in all. It all fit in real nice. Everything was complete and just right. Henry had sat there for awhile on the third step. But then he felt better so he opened his eyes and moved down a step so's he could draw in the dust with his shoe. A car stopped out by the gate and Henry watched four men get out slowly like they was afraid. Mr. Johnson was one and the sheriff. And two other guys from town. They walked up his pa's dusty driveway toward him. He waited for them there on the stairs, letting the sun soak into him and make him and warm and sleepy. He scratched an arc in the dust with his foot and waited. He was sitting on the fourth step. The last one.



The coming season

Unclad, the bony fingers on the lawn
Reach skyward, clutching at the cold gray blast
That strips them of their garb. Piling his spoil
In a gutter, the mocking thief coughs on.

